



## OWEN CEMETERY VETERAN'S MONUMENT....A Community Wide Service Project

It is difficult to go to a cemetery without thinking of a significant event in our lives. I am no different. To me, one of those significant events occurred in December, 2006 when a young Marine Lance Corporal attempted to rescue a wounded comrade in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. The press signified the event as the 2,901 casualty of the Iraqi war, but I knew him as my best friend's son. Tommy Echols was a month shy of 21, died a hero, and never had the opportunity to hold his unborn daughter. As we move from winter to spring and another Memorial Day, I think of Tommy. And we all reflect on the losses of men and women throughout our history. On Memorial Day, we celebrate their lives and recognize their sacrifice for our freedoms and protection.

I view a cemetery as a place to not necessarily mourn the dead, but to recognize and celebrate one's life. In that context, we developed a fitting tribute to honor those that have served, and those that are currently serving by building a Veteran's Monument at the Owen Cemetery located on River Road. Thomas Township is supplying most materials to build this monument, however individual 8 inch by 8 inch engraved bricks to recognize veterans will be sold at \$ 35.00 each. Three lines of engraving with 13 characters per line are available. We wish to honor all who served, alive or passed on, those who have faced enemies on a foreign battlefield or different giants in peacetime as our shield.

Here's how you can help. Public Works is recruiting service clubs, students, scouts, and everyday individuals who would be willing to donate their labor in the construction of this monument. Very soon, I will be contacting the various organized service clubs in our community. We are asking for a 4 hour day, on a series of scheduled Saturday's beginning in May, in which to share in the construction of this fitting monument. It is our hope to properly dedicate the display on Veteran's Day, November 11, 2009. If you are interested in joining us in this community wide service project, or if you wish to purchase an engraved brick, please contact the Public Works office at 781-0150 or fax the enclosed sheet to DPW 781-0290. You may also contact the department through the web site at [www.Thomastwp.org](http://www.Thomastwp.org). Many hands make light work; your hands will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely Yours,

*Rick Hopper*

Rick Hopper, Director of Public Works

Thomas Township

